

Weekly Media Review of Hungarian Communities Abroad

36/2016



PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE
STATE SECRETARIAT FOR HUNGARIAN
COMMUNITIES ABROAD

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Scholarship holders of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor and Petőfi Sándor Programs start their work

The State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad has sent a statement to the Hungarian news agency MTI, announcing that 127 freshly prepared interns of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program and the Petőfi Sándor Program have started their work aimed at the preservation of traditions and Hungarian identity. The State Secretariat is sending out young people committed to national causes to a number of countries around the world for the fourth time this year in order to reinforce the national identity of Hungarians living there and to support Hungarian-Hungarian relations. The interns' task is to organize different community programs, teach Hungarian language and history, and promote scattered Hungarian communities' links with the kin-state. It is highlighted in the statement that as part of the Kőrösi Csoma Sándor Program, 77 scholarship holders are serving for nine months as of the first of September in the Northern Hemisphere: in the United States, Canada and Europe. The Petőfi Sándor Program is being launched for the second time this year, with the participation of 51 scholarship holders. The Program includes the territory of the former monarchy, covering Romania, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Southern Poland.

The Rákóczi Association launches travel programs for scattered Hungarian communities

The Rákóczi Association – Hungary's largest civil organization dealing with Hungarian communities abroad – is providing an opportunity for 1,850 members of dispersed Hungarian communities in the Carpathian Basin and 650 Hungarians living in diaspora to participate in shorter or longer excursions in the kin-state. The program which started a year ago and ends in June 2017, focuses on those Hungarians who live in towns or cities abroad in which the ratio of Hungarians is under 10 % of the population. As part of the program, Hungarians living in North and South America, South Africa, Australia and Western Europe will have a chance to travel to Hungary and take part in different programs. The excursions will last 3-14 days. The invited participants of the program will be chosen from the organizations of the Hungarian Diaspora Council. The programs will take place in Hungary, including Budapest and rural venues as well, and will also include towns and cities in neighboring countries inhabited by Hungarians.



Parliamentary elections in Romania are scheduled to take place on 11 December

On Wednesday, Romania's government announced that the country will hold a parliamentary election on 11 December 2016. Prime Minister Dacian Cioloș, who



heads a technocratic government, said that the government will make it easier for Romanians living abroad to vote, permitting voters to vote electronically or by mail. In accordance with an amendment to the Romanian electoral law adopted last year, a proportional representation electoral system – which was used before 2008 – will be applied in Romania again. The new two-house parliament will be slimmer, with 466 legislators – 308 deputies, 134 senators, 18 deputies from ethnic minorities in Romania and six others representing Romanians abroad. The threshold for parliamentary representation will remain 5 %, but there also will be an alternative threshold to help regional parties win seats. Due to this alternative threshold, parties which will not reach the 5 % threshold at a national level but win at least 20 % of the vote in four counties, will also have seats in Parliament.

Transylvanian Hungarian bishop Áron Márton's remains are exhumed

With the prior approval of the Holy See, a committee of 17 people has opened on September 1 the grave of Transylvanian Hungarian Catholic bishop Áron Márton. The remains of the bishop were exhumed, and will be placed in the Cathedral of Gyulafehérvár/Alba Iulia. Vicar general of the Gyulafehérvár Roman Catholic Diocese Ferenc Potyó said that the aim of the exhumation was to place the corpse of the highly respected martyr bishop in a more “distinguished” place, in order to make it easier for his followers to pay tribute to his memory. On 29 September, the occasion of the 36th anniversary of the death of Bishop Márton Áron on the feast of St. Michael the Archangel, patron saint of the ancient cathedral, a Mass will be presided over by Miguel Maury Buendía Apostolic Nuncio. The event is also part of the Áron Márton Memorial Year which was launched by the State Secretariat for Hungarian Communities Abroad at the Prime Minister's Office. The memorial year which consists of several jubilee conferences, irregular history lessons and competitions for students, started on 24 December 2015 and will end on 24 December 2016.



Slovakia's Minister of Transport resigns

Slovakia's minister of transport Roman Brecely has resigned after his party, the Siet (“Net”) was on the verge of cessation. The new minister of transport will be a member of the Slovak-Hungarian mixed party Most-Híd (“Bridge”) Árpád Érsek who is the current state secretary responsible for transport. The coalition will continue to have 81 representatives in the 150-member parliament. The Smer-SD has 49 members, the Slovakian National Party (SNS) – 15, the Most-Híd – 15 and the Siet – 2 members, respectively. On Monday, the head of the Most-Híd Béla Bugár introduced his party's candidate for the ministerial post Árpád Érsek to President of Slovakia Andrej Kiska. At the meeting, Mr. Érsek said that – as one of his first actions – he will prepare a project on the basis of which roads important for Slovakia can be built or modernized.



Central school year opening ceremony in Vojvodina

The central school year opening ceremony of Hungarian schools in Vojvodina was held in Bácsfeketehegy/Feketić and Kishegyes/Mali Idoš. During the ceremony, children received packages of schools supplies from the Hungarian National Council (MNT). The event was attended by several public figures from Hungary and Serbia. Speaking at the ceremony, the head of the Hungarian National Council Jenő Hajnal said that the number of Hungarian first-graders in Vojvodina decreased by 15 people. The president of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians and head of the Provincial House of Representatives István Pásztor expressed his gratitude to the Hungarian Government for the various kinds of support the kin-state ensures for Vojvodina not only in the field of education but also in the field of economy and other fields. Mr. Pásztor added that “due to the Hungarian Government’s policy for Hungarian communities abroad, a new system was established in Vojvodina which can help people in different fields of life.” He added that by supporting 1,500 Hungarian children, Hungary helps 1,500 Hungarian families in Vojvodina.”



Online registration period for the Ede Egán Transcarpathian Economic Development Program is over

On 31 August, the online registration period for the Ede Egán Transcarpathian Economic Development Program was closed. The 2 billion HUF (EUR 6.3 million) program was launched by the Hungarian Government at the end of 2015 and is aimed at strengthening Hungarian economic life in Transcarpathia. In order to realize the program, the Cultural Alliance of Hungarians in Transcarpathia (KMKSZ) established an economic development center in the region. Speaking in connection with the program, political and communication secretary of the KMKSZ Karolina Darcsi said that the majority of applications were received in the field of tourism, but after the program became open for traders and entrepreneurs as well, the number of registrations increased significantly.



Árpád János Potápi: Hungary ensures school supplies for Hungarian students in Croatia

State Secretary for Hungarian Communities Abroad Árpád János Potápi said that Hungary helps students studying in Hungarian-language primary and secondary schools in Croatia by ensuring schools supplies and financial assistance for them worth 1.5 million HUF (EUR 4.800). The state secretary took part in a school year opening ceremony in Croatia’s Eszék/Osijek organized by the Forum of Hungarian Teachers in Croatia (HMPF) where he met Hungarian students and their parents. Mr.



Potápi said that the state secretariat handed over 71 packages of school supplies for children and ensured financial assistance for their parents. The state secretary added with this help and other similar measures they would like to encourage Hungarian parents in Croatia and other neighboring countries to choose Hungarian-language schools for their children.

